

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 SP-02
L-01 INR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 H-01
EB-03 OES-02 NEA-07 IO-06 PRS-01 DHA-02 SAB-02
/062 W

-----130428Z 088728 /11

R 112252Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7609
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CARACAS 4710

LIMDIS

BRASILIA FOR ASST. SECRETARY TODMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF, XM, OPEN, OAS, AR, BH, PN, US, VE
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION BETWEEN ASST. SECRETARY TODMAN
AND VENEZUELAN FOREIGN MINISTER

1. ASST. SECRETARY TODMAN, ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR,
CALLED ON FONMIN ESCOVAR FOR ABOUT ONE HOUR ON MAY 10. ESCOVAR
WAS ALSO PRESENT DURING PRECEDING CALL ON PRESIDENT PEREZ.
ISSUE CLEARLY UPPERMOST ON FONMIN'S MIND, WHICH HE STRESSED
TWICE IN CONVERSATION, WAS PRESIDENT PEREZ' VISIT TO THE U.S.
THE FONMIN SAID THAT ALTHOUGH GOV ACCEPTS THE DATES FOR
PEREZ VISIT TO WASHINGTON AS NOW SCHEDULED (JUNE 29-30),
GOV WOULD PREFER THAT THE VISIT BEGIN ONE DAY EARLIER
(JUNE 28-29). HE ASKED ASST. SECY. TODMAN TO DO WHAT HE
COULD TO MOVE THE VISIT BACK ONE DAY. BOTH ASST. SECY
AND AMBASSADOR SAID THAT THEY WOULD PASS ON GOV'S REQUEST.
FONMIN SAID THAT ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF
PRESIDENT PEREZ' VISIT TO WASHINGTON WOULD BE A) POLITICAL
ISSUES--CONTACT WITH BOTH THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE CONGRESS;
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B) ECONOMIC ISSUES, PARTICULARLY ENERGY, WITH AN OPPORTUNITY
TO DISCUSS FINANCIAL QUESTIONS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF
BILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION; C) NUCLEAR ISSUES, AND,
FINALLY, D) CONTACT WITH IMPORTANT U.S. BUSINESS ENTERPRISES.
ASST. SECY TODMAN SAID THAT NORTH/SOUTH ISSUES COULD ALSO BE
DISCUSSED. FONMIN REPLIED THAT THE NORTH/SOUTH CONFERENCE
WOULD BE OVER BY THEN, BUT ASST. SECY SUGGESTED THAT MANY

OF THE ISSUES OF THE NORTH/SOUTH CONFERENCE WILL STILL BE UNRESOLVED BY THEN AND HE CITED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AS AN EXAMPLE. FONMIN AGREED.

2. THE FONMIN SAID THAT ASST. SECY TODMAN MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT PRESIDENT PEREZ' RECENT VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST. HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE HAD BEEN LITTLE DISCUSSION OF THIS DURING THE EARLIER MEETING WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ. WITH REGARD TO OPEC, HE EXPLAINED THAT VENEZUELA SOUGHT NOT SIMPLY TO STRENGTHEN OPEC, BUT ALSO TO ATTAIN PRICE STABILITY. HE SAID THERE WAS INTEREST IN SUCH STABILITY IN ALL THE MAJOR MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES. HE POINTED OUT ALSO THAT THE GOV BELIEVES THAT DISUNITY WITHIN OPEC CAN LEAD TO POLITICAL INSTABILITY. THE FONMIN THEN POINTED OUT THAT THERE ARE GOOD POSSIBILITIES FOR A SINGLE PRICE EMERGING SOON WITHIN OPEC. HE SAID "WE ARE CLOSE." THE IDEA, HE EXPLAINED FURTHER, IS TO SET A CEILING ON PETROLEUM PRICES. ASST. SECY. TODMAN SAID THAT WHAT WAS ALSO IMPORTANT WAS A FREEZE ON PETROLEUM PRICES WHICH WOULD LAST FOR SOME TIME; THE FONMIN REPLIED WITH A CHUCKLE THAT WHAT THE U.S. CALLS A FREEZE THE VENEZUELANS CALL PRICE STABILITY.

3. TURNING TO THE MIDDLE EAST, FONMIN SAID THAT THE U.S. ATTITUDE AND DECISIONS ARE DECISIVE IN SETTLING MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM. HE SAID THAT THERE ARE SOME COUNTRIES, LIKE LIBYA, WHICH ARE EXTREMELY HARD LINE, BUT THAT THE VENEZUELANS BELIEVE THE OTHER MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES SEEM MORE FLEXIBLE. HE SAID THAT THERE COULD BE A SETTLEMENT IN THAT REGION SOON. IT MIGHT NOT BE AS EARLY AS DECEMBER 1977, BUT PERHAPS NOT
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TOO LONG AFTER THAT. HE THEN ADDED THAT, OF COURSE, ISRAEL'S ATTITUDE WOULD ALSO BE CRUCIAL. THE FONMIN SAID THAT SO FAR AS ISRAEL IS CONCERNED, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT IT HAVE SECURE FRONTIERS, AS MENTIONED BY PRESIDENT CARTER. THE FONMIN ALSO SAID THAT SOME OF THE COMMUNIQUE SIGNED BY THE VENEZUELANS DURING THE MIDDLE EAST RRIP HAD BEEN CRITICIZED IN VENEZUELA. HE EMPHASIZED THAT NOTHING SUBSTANTIAL HAD CHANGED IN THE VENEZUELAN POSITION ON THE MIDDLE EAST. WHAT HAD CAUSED ALARM, HE SAID, WAS THE MENTION OF THE PALESTINIANS BECAUSE THE GOV HAD NOT ADDRESSED THEM BEFORE. HE STRESSED THAT, IN ESSENCE, THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE AND SAID THAT IN THE GOV'S OPINION, THE VISIT WAS VERY POSITIVE.

3. THE FONMIN SAID THAT HE HAD SPOKEN TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS ROGERS AND SECRETARY KISSINGER DURING THEIR VISITS TO VENEZUELA, URGING THE U.S. TO DO MORE TO ENCOURAGE MANY COUNTRIES BACK ON THE ROAD TOWARD DEMOCRACY. HE INSISTED THAT ALL THAT WAS NECESSARY WAS SOME JUDICIOUS

NUDGES. HE OBSERVED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THERE ARE INSTINCTS
WITHIN THE PRESENT AND PREDECESSOR ECUADORAN GOVERNMENT
TO MOVE TOWARD DEMOCRACY AND THAT, WITH A LITTLE HELP, THEY
MIGHT ACHIEVE THAT. IN PERU, HE SAID, THINGS WERE MOVING
SLOWLY BACK TO DEMOCRACY, BUT IN CHILE, THE GOV BELIEVES
THAT THE PINOCHET GOVERNMENT IS STILL VERY MUCH HARD LINE
BECAUSE IT HAS NO SENSITIVITY TO POLITICS. IN FACT, HE SAID,
PRESIDENT PINOCHET AND HIS GOVERNMENT ARE "NAUSEATED BY
POLITICS." WITH RESPECT TO ARGENTINA, HE SAID THE GOV SEES PRESIDENT
VIDELA'S VISIT TO VENEZUELA AS A WAY OF NUDGING ARGENTINA
TOWARD DEMOCRACY.

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/062 W

-----130426Z 088781 /11

R 112252Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7610
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CARACAS 4710

LIMDIS

BRASILIA FOR ASST. SECRETARY TODMAN

HE SAID THAT THE GOV BELIEVES SOME
CIVILIAN GROUPS IN ARGENTINA ALSO VIEW VIDELA'S VISIT TO
VENEZUELA TO BE A MOVE IN THAT DIRECTION. HOWEVER,
HE SAID, REDEMOCRATIZATION IN ARGENTINA WOULD BE A LONG
PROCESS AND VENEZUELA DOES NOT HAVE A "RIVER JORDAN WHERE
PEOPLE CAN COME FOR A POLITICAL SHAMPOO." HE SAID
THERE WERE SOME GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL SIMILARITIES
BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH HELP STRENGTHEN THEIR
RELATIONSHIP, BUT THAT WHAT WAS LACKING IN ARGENTINA
WAS "POLITICAL MATURITY." HE ALSO CITED CENTRAL AMERICA
AS AN EXAMPLE OF AN AREA WHERE IT IS POSSIBLE TO MOVE
SLOWLY TOWARD DEMOCRACY. HE SAID THAT IT IS IMPORTANT
TO HAVE ELECTIONS IN ALL OF THOSE COUNTRIES, EVEN THOUGH

THEY MAY BE SOMEWHAT DEFECTIVE. AFTER ALL, HE SAID,
"EVERYONE KNOWS NICARAGUA CANNOT BECOME SWITZERLAND."

4. WITH RESPECT TO PRESIDENT CARTER, FONMIN SAID THAT
PRESIDENT PEREZ AND THE VENEZUELANS IN GENERAL ARE VERY
HAPPY WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S POSITION, PARTICULARLY ON
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HUMAN RIGHTS. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE REITERATED WHAT
PRESIDENT PEREZ HAD SAID, THAT THE GOV IS VERY CONCERNED
ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN AFRICA. IT IS MOST IMPORTANT, SAID
THE FONMIN, TO HELP FOMENT DEMOCRACY IN THAT PART OF
THE WORLD. HE STRESSED SEVERAL TIMES THAT PRESIDENT
CARTER'S EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY WERE
MOVES IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND HAD TO BE IMPLEMENTED.
HE ALSO SAID THAT VENEZUELA BELIEVES THAT THE US HAS
ALWAYS VIEWED WITH SUSPICION LATIN AMERICAN EFFORTS AT
INTEGRATION. HE SAID THAT PRESIDENT KENNEDY HAD EXCELLENT
INSTINCTS, BUT HE TENDED TO TREAT LATIN AMERICA AS A
WHOLE, FORGETTING ABOUT THE INDIVIDUALITY OF EACH COUNTRY.
SECRETARY KISSINGER, HE SAID, BEGAN THE SAME WAY, BUT
SOON REALIZED THAT EACH COUNTRY IS DIFFERENT. HE SAID
THAT HE HAD TOLD SECY. KISSINGER THAT IT WAS NECESSARY
TO TREAT EACH COUNTRY AS AN INDIVIDUAL, BUT TO HAVE
GENERAL POLICIES APPLICABLE TO THE ENTIRE REGION. ASST.
SECY. TODMAN SAID THAT THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT PRESIDENT
CARTER HAS IN MIND. THE USG BELIVES THAT, THROUGH
THE OAS AND PERHAPS EVEN SELA, THERE ARE CERTAIN QUESTIONS
BETTER DEALT WITH REGIONALLY THAN BILATERALLY. HOWEVER,
THE US MUST BE VERY CAREFUL IN ANY REGIONAL EFFORTS NOT
TO APPEAR TO DOMINATE THE PROCESS.

5. THE FONMIN POINTED OUT THAT PRESIDENT PEREZ HAD MADE
CLEAR VENEZUELA'S INTEREST IN A SETTLEMENT OF THE BELIZE
QUESTION. HE SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY BELIEVES THAT THE
UK CAN DO MORE TO HELP SETTLE THE PROBLEM, AND HE HAD SO
TOLD THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR AND MR. ROWLANDS. IT MAY
BE NECESSARY TO MAKE SOME SMALL TERRITORIAL CON-
CESSIONS IN ORDER TO SAVE GUATEMALA'S FACE, BUT THE GOVE
BELIEVES THAT THE BULK OF ANY COMPENSATION PAID TO GUATEMALA
SHOULD NOT BE TERRITORIAL, BUT PROBABLY ECONOMIC. HE SIAD HE
HAD SPOKEN TO THE GUATEMALAN FONMIN AND TO BELIZE'S PRICE
ALONG THESE LINES. HE SIAD THE GOV BELIEVES THAT
"EVERYBODY" WANTS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE BELIZE SITUATION.
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BOTH JAMAICA AND CUBA WANT TO GET INVOLVED AND "WE CANNOT HAVE THAT HAPPEN."

6. ASST. SECY. TODMAN ASKED THE FONMIN'S VIEWS ABOUT THE OAS MEETING TO BE HELD IN GRENADA. HE OBSERVED THAT NOBODY SEEMS TO WANT TO MEET THERE, BUT THAT NOBODY WANTS TO SAY SO PUBLICLY. THE FONMIN REPLIED THAT GRENADA WAS BEAUTIFUL BUT THAT THE OAS SHOULD HAVE MET IN WASHINGTON WITH PERHAPS SOME SPECIAL ACT TO PLACATE GRENADAN SENSITIVITIES. HE WONDERED WHETHER ANYTHING IMPORTANT WAS GOING TO TAKE PLACE DURING THE MEETING IN GRENADA. ASST. TODMAN REPLIED THAT HE WAS GOING TO ADVISE SECRETARY VANCE ABOUT ATTENDING THE MEETING AND IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO THE SECRETARY'S PLANS TO KNOW WHETHER THERE WOULD BE OTHER FOREIGN MINISTERS THERE WITH WHOM HE COULD TALK. THE FONMIN SAID THAT IN HIS VIEW THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SUCH BILATERAL MEETINGS WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF OAS MEETINGS. HE REPEATED HIS EARLIER IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT LITTLE OF IMPORTANCE WOULD BE TAKING PLACE IN GRENADA.

7. THE FONMIN ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE BRIEFINGS GIVEN BY AMBASSADORS BUNKER AND LINOWITZ TO PRESIDENT PEREZ HAD BEEN VERY GOOD. HE SAID THAT PRESIDENT PEREZ AND THE GOV WERE VERY SATISFIED. AMBASSADOR VAKY ASKED WHETHER ANYTHING HAD COME OF PRESIDENT PEREZ' OFFER TO SET DOWN ON PAPER THE BASIC POINTS FOR AN AGREEMENT ON PANAMA. THE FONMIN SAID THAT PRESIDENT PEREZ HAD NOT SPOKEN AGAIN OF THAT OFFER.

8. ILO AND THE ILLICIT PAYMENTS TREATY WERE ALSO DISCUSSED, AND ARE BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY. VAKY

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Message Attributes

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